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News Release

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Retired St. Paul Police Officer Sentenced to Federal Prison on Drug Charges

Minneapolis - Retired St. Paul police officer Clemmie Howard Tucker was sentenced to sixty months in federal prison today for attempting to possess with the intent to sell more than 500 grams of methamphetamine. The sentence was imposed by United States District Court Judge Joan N. Ericksen this morning after Tucker pleaded guilty to the crime in September of 2006. Tucker, age 51, who was part of the St. Paul Police Department's K-9 Unit during the 1980's, was ordered to surrender voluntarily on April 11, 2007, to begin his term of incarceration.

According to court documents in this case, Tucker went to the Minneapolis Greyhound Bus Depot on June 2, 2006, to retrieve a box and a suitcase that had arrived the previous day from Fresno, California. The packages were being held under the name "John Mason." A bus depot guard located the packages and then asked Tucker for a description of their contents as well as personal identification. Tucker replied that the box and suitcase contained military equipment, and that his name was John Mason. He added, however, he had no identification. The guard explained

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that without proper identification, he could not release the items. Tucker then reached into the suitcase and retrieved a photograph of a police officer posing with a dog. He told the guard he was the officer in the picture. The guard did not believe him and opened the box. Inside, he found what appeared to be pieces of a dismantled table. At that point, Tucker became evasive and left the building.

Court documents state that the guard followed Tucker outside the building and watched him approach a car, later determined to be registered to the retired officer. From that vehicle, Tucker retrieved a “tracer” form issued to him by the bus company. He presented the form to the guard. It identified the box and the suitcase and listed Tucker’s St. Paul address and two telephone numbers, one of which was Tucker’s home number. In addition, the name “John Mason” was handwritten on the form. Again, however, the guard refused to release the items, so Tucker left the premises. The guard then called police.

Court documents state that while waiting for the police to arrive, the security guard examined the table legs found in the box. After he heard what sounded like a granular substance inside, Greyhound personnel broke open one of the legs. There, they discovered a crystal-like substance. When police arrived, they secured the box and the suitcase and applied for a search warrant. A search of the box yielded approximately ten kilograms of cocaine and a quantity of methamphetamine. In the suitcase, police found about six more kilograms of methamphetamine.

This case was the result of an investigation by the Minneapolis Police Department and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force. Assistant United States Attorney Andrew R. Winter prosecuted the case.

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